



City of Somerville

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

SEPTEMBER 14, 2021, MEETING MINUTES

This meeting was conducted via remote participation on GoToWebinar.

NAME	TITLE	STATUS
Sarah Lewis	Co-Chair	<i>Present</i>
Cortney Kirk	Acting Co-Chair	<i>Present</i>
Frank Valdes	Member	<i>Present – Left at 7:24 PM</i>
Deborah Fennick	Member	<i>Present</i>
Andrew Arbaugh	Member	<i>Present</i>
Tim Talun	Member	<i>Present</i>

City staff present: Andrew Graminski (Planning & Zoning), Dan Bartman (Planning & Zoning)
The meeting was called to order at 6:10pm and adjourned at 10:00pm.

GENERAL BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes Approval

Draft minutes not yet completed. Minutes will be approved at a future meeting.

PUBLIC MEETING: 45 Broadway

Member Arbaugh recused himself.

The applicant team went over the existing site conditions and location context. They presented one massing option and articulated the building massing to generate a gateway to the Broadway corridor. The applicant team presented three façade design options. They also spoke about the existing and proposed landscape plan. The team needs to work with MADOT on some of the landscaping where the property abuts DOT property.

The Commission decided to wait until after the 51 Broadway presentation to make any comments.

Following a motion by Member Valdes, seconded by Member Fennick, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to continue the design review to a future meeting.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

PUBLIC MEETING: 51 Broadway

The applicant team presented the building massing and the one access point on western edge of site. They noted that they plan to incorporate public artwork incorporated on retaining wall near the access point. They expect to push the penthouse inward about 25' on western side of building. The applicant team presented three façade design options, as well as a green wall at the base of the building. They discussed the landscape plan, as well as the public realm amenities.

The applicant team then showed a rendering of preferred façade option of 45 and 51 Broadway combined.

The Commission and applicant team discussed both 45 and 51 Broadway together. They spoke about the large mechanical penthouse, the design of the two buildings and the fact that the Commission feels that the two buildings are not working together, the curb side management and tenant interaction along Broadway, and access to the bike room.

The Commission asked the applicant team to meet with the Engineering department to discuss what is in the public right of way vs what is private, as well as refine their design before the next meeting.

Following a motion by Member Valdes, seconded by Member Fennick, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to continue the design review to a future meeting.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

Member Valdes left the meeting at 7:24 PM.

PUBLIC MEETING: 59 Bow St

Member Arbaugh rejoined the meeting.

The applicant team presented the 15 residential unit, net zero ready general building. They went over the location context and existing conditions. They discussed the proposed ground floor restaurant/café use, as well as the building massing options. No parking is being proposed. There will be a green roof on the fourth and fifth roof. Three façade design options were presented. The preferred design option incorporates brick with dark fiber cement clapboard for the materiality, with an open and transparent ground floor commercial area.

The Commission and applicant team discussed the entry way and other possible options, the façade options, the materiality choices, how the fence along the ground floor units isn't working, how to incorporate an outdoor amenity space into the design, and the landscaping plan including incorporating pavers on a private way.

Following a motion by Member Fennick, seconded by Member Arbaugh, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to recommend the applicant's preferred façade design, option one.

Following a motion by Member Talun, seconded by Member Fennick, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to prioritize design guideline F.

Following a motion by Member Arbaugh, seconded by Member Fennick, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to recommend that the design guidelines have been met.

Following a motion by Member Arbaugh, seconded by Member Fennick, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to incorporate additional design feedback into the design.

Following a motion by Member Fennick, seconded by Member Talun, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to recommend that the final material pallet submitted will be reviewed by the Urban Design Commission.

RESULT:

RECOMMENDED

PUBLIC MEETING: 1 McGrath Highway

(continued from August 24, 2021)

The applicant team presented the design updates. The façade design options vary from more traditional to modern to a hybrid scheme. The materiality precedents were presented in detail. The team also spoke to the landscaping plan including the species of plants on the green roof and street trees on the Cambridge side of the property.

The Commission and applicant team discussed the streetscape, pedestrian access, and coordination with MADOT. They also spoke about the landscaping plan including the second floor courtyard, façade options, and materiality. They touched upon the plan for bike ramp to the community path.

Following a motion by Member Arbaugh, seconded by Member Fennick, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to recommend the applicants preferred façade design option.

Following a motion by Member Talun, seconded by Member Fennick, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to recommend that in order to satisfy the MR6 design guidelines, the project can move forward to further develop the design, but will need to return to the Urban Design Commission to remedy underlying concerns raised by the Commission.

Following a motion by Member Fennick, seconded by Member Talun, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to recommend that the final material palette submitted will be reviewed by the Urban Design Commission along with a building mockup.

RESULT:

RECOMMENDED

The meeting recessed at 9:15 PM and resumed at 9:18 PM

PUBLIC MEETING: 1153 Broadway

(continued from August 24, 2021)

The applicant provided a follow-up presentation from previous design review and provided information requested from the Commission regarding accessibility. The applicant presented renderings of the façade options that tempted to incorporate comments made by the commission. The common roof deck was reduced in size from the previous presentation.

The Commission and applicant discussed materiality of the lintel expression and how it could be examined further, as well as the copper horizontal datum.

The Commission felt that the design guidelines were not being met, as the project does not have enough in the presentation and submittal to review in its urban context. The Commission requested to see renderings with the building and its surrounding context.

Following a motion by Member Talun, seconded by Member Fennick, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to continue the design review to a future meeting.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

OTHER BUSINESS: Davis Square Design Guidelines

Co-Chair Lewis continued this agenda item to a future meeting.

NOTICE: These minutes constitute a summary of the votes and key discussions at this meeting. To review a full recording, please contact the Planning & Zoning Division at planning@somervillema.gov.